



Charles County Department of Emergency Services STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Section 400 - Emergency Operations

Emergency Medical Response - 403.00		
S.O.P. # 403.09	Medical and Pharmaceutical Waste Disposal	PAGE: 1 OF 2
EFFECTIVE: 01/02/2018	Authorized: John Filer, Chief	
REVISED: 03/11/2019	Authorized: William Stephens, Director	

403.09.01 Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to establish policy and procedures for the proper disposal of medical, pharmaceutical, and universal waste.

403.09.02 Cited References

1. Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010.
2. 40 CFR Part 273 - Standards of Universal Waste Management.
3. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) of 1976.

403.09.03 Definitions

1. **Medical Waste** - For the purpose of this SOP, medical waste is defined as biohazardous waste, biomedical waste, sharps waste or infectious waste.
2. **Pharmaceutical Waste** - For the purpose of this SOP, pharmaceutical waste is defined as prescription medications, over the counter medications, related IV fluids, and any of the aforementioned that has expired.
3. **Universal Waste** - For the purpose of this SOP, universal waste is defined as waste generated from medical and rescue equipment such as batteries, devices containing Mercury and fluorescent lamps.

403.09.04 Policy

1. Medical, pharmaceutical, and universal waste shall be disposed of in an approved waste container specific to its class.
2. Pharmaceutical waste will not be disposed of with conventional garbage or down a drain or sewer.
3. Bulk pharmaceutical waste containers are located at the Emergency Services Building or the EMS Field Operations Office (District III).
4. Bulk universal waste containers are located at the Emergency Services Building.
5. Approved waste containers may be obtained through Logistics.



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6. Each county ambulance and EMS chase capable unit shall be outfitted with an approved sharps disposal container and securing device.
7. Each county ambulance shall be outfitted with an approved medical waste disposal container.

403.09.05 Procedures

1. Personnel should separate and properly dispose of medical, pharmaceutical, and universal waste in their specified waste container/s.
2. Personnel who do not have access to a proper waste container should contact the on-duty Medical Duty Officer (MDO) or Special Operations Officer (SOO).
3. Personnel should not force waste objects into a full waste container, to do so may result in injury or an unwanted exposure.
4. Full medical and sharps waste containers should be reported to the on-duty MDO for proper disposal and re-supply of a new container/s.
5. Pharmaceutical waste should be reported and collected by the MDO for proper disposal.
6. Universal waste may be reported to the SOO for collection and proper disposal.
7. Full waste containers will be swapped out, one full for one empty.
8. Full waste containers should be reported and/or remitted to Logistics for proper disposal.
9. Logistics is responsible for the documentation, packaging, and shipment of all waste containers back to the reverse distribution collection site.

403.09.06 Standards

1. The standard sharps container for transport ambulances is the five (5) quart sharps disposal container.
2. The standard sharps container for EMS chase style apparatus is the one (1) quart sharps disposal container.